

The Hero

The girl was sitting upon a seat contemptively regarding the horizon. The soldier approached a little nearer; for some time unbroken silence reigned, the bashful Tommy sucking greedily upon a wild-woodbine whilst his fair companion gazed—and gazed, and still gazed away over the silvery waves.

At length the Bashful Tommy broke the silence. "Well" he exclaimed, throwing the now finished cig. away, and assuming an air of supercilious indifference, "this *is* a lovely day for crab fishing!" "Do you ever go crab fishing?"

G. "Sometimes."

B T. "I have not been down on the sands since I came home, but what a fine place it is!"

G. "Have you been wounded?"

B. T. "M'm, yes! twice."

G. "Poor boy, are you getting better now?"

B T. "Oh yes."

G. "Come tell me all about it, where were you wounded?"

B T. "Oh, in the appendix."

G. "No, but where in France?"

B T. "In Belgium it was, in the appendix."

G. "Oh dear, how dreadful! Are your folks in England?"

B T. "Oh no, they are in Canada. You see it was like this, we were making a charge when two big Germans got at me. I hit the one nearest; (he with the big fat periscope face) and bayoneted the other. I had two bombs in one hand, and without even pausing to withdraw the pins I threw the bombs and killed the other fellow."

G. "But you bayoneted one and knocked out the *other*. Yes, it was awful."

B T. "Another day I was having a wash in a shell hole, and saw two sausage shifters approaching cautiously. I really do believe it was the same two. Without even pausing to clean my teeth, I up at them like a whiz-bang—kill 'em? why sure! Hullo! its 5 30, I must away down town for tea; see you again. Good-bye dear."

G. "Good-bye."

* * * *

"Well I declare! Hullo Mabel! Who would have thought of seeing you here? Oh, I was speaking to that soldier chap just gone down."

"You were speaking to the fat man, eh! Lucky devil, he won't go to the firing line! Got a staff job in the Pay and Record Office, and down here on pass from London. Shall we go for tea May."

"M'm yes."